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ABSTRACT

This document is the result of a six-month process of obtaining input from a variety of community college stakeholders in North Carolina to help determine a direction for the state's 59 community colleges. Several hundred people were involved in developing these strategic initiatives, goals, and objectives. There are two main sections in the report: (1) planning assumptions, which include the areas of education and training, economic, demographic, political, social, and technology; and (2) the strategic initiatives of the North Carclina Community College System, which comprise five major areas--training the workforce for emerging jobs and a changing workplace, serving the lifelong learning needs of diverse populations, promoting quality and flexible programs and services, procuring and allocating essential resources for the system, and leveraging the power of technology. Within these five major areas are 15 main goals, each of which has between 1 and 5 sub-goals with an assigned deadline. Five appendices are included: (1) a glossary of terms used in the document; (2) a list of the members of the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges and their addresses; (3) planning council members; (4) advisory committee members; and (5) environmental scanning team members. (TGO)

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Adopted by
State Board of Community Colleges
June 19, 1998

1999-2001

Strategic Plan

North Carolina Community College System

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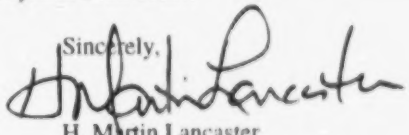
PREFACE

One of my first initiatives as president of the North Carolina Community College System was to direct my staff to develop a system-wide planning process that would be ongoing and would involve all of the major stakeholders. The purpose of the planning process is to set the strategic direction for the North Carolina Community College System and to guide the development of the biennial budget requests. The plan must also be stated in concrete terms so that the System can report on progress toward achieving the goals and objectives defined in the plan.

We began the planning process in January of this year with the Futures Conference at which time we heard experts describe emerging trends that will impact community colleges. Approximately 120 people from all across the state participated in the conference and contributed to the process by developing planning assumptions to guide us in developing our strategic initiatives, goals, and objectives. The State Board of Community Colleges reviewed the mission statement and agreed upon five strategic initiatives. The Planning Council, whose members include State Board representatives, presidents, trustees, one student, faculty, college administrators, and System Office staff, used the planning assumptions in developing goals and objectives that relate to the five strategic initiatives.

I am pleased that we have engaged in a process over the last six months that has resulted in a document that gives direction to our fifty-nine institutions and the North Carolina Community College SystemOffice. By working together, we have developed a shared vision that will enable us to make the best community college system even better.

Sincerely,



H. Martin Lancaster
President
North Carolina Community College System

Planning Assumptions, 1999-2001

Education and Training

(1) Virtually all work and education will take place in an environment permeated by technology; therefore, community colleges must have the equipment to train their students on current technology.

(2) Community colleges must actively promote the articulation, integration, transition, and transfer of programs and courses across the educational sectors--from kindergarten to high school to community college to university.

(3) Because of high costs associated with technical education and training, a differentiated funding formula for community colleges must be developed.

(4) Community colleges must be flexible in delivery of training in non-traditional places, times and methods and in a cost-effective manner.

(5) Community colleges must better prepare students for real-world work and life by increasing opportunities for entrepreneurial development (business and personal) and for work-based learning.

(6) Employability skills (SCANS) will be required for successful employment; therefore, community colleges must incorporate these skills in their curricula and programs.

(7) Community colleges will need to balance the mix of educational programs based upon the needs of the community (including technical training, college transfer and flexible training options).

(8) As leaders in technical education and training, community colleges must develop ways of responding to the problem of delivering high cost technical programs, including regional programming.

(9) The future success of North Carolina Community Colleges requires increased emphasis on partnerships and other collaborative arrangements.

Economic

(1) Higher expectation for the minimum skill levels required for entering the workforce means that community colleges must provide greater access to post-secondary educational and training opportunities.

(2) The demand for specialized vocational training will increase as the costs of this specialized training escalate. Community colleges will have difficulty responding to this demand given the current funding levels.

(3) Limited funding growth for the Community College System will hamper the ability of colleges to respond to the increased demand for high-cost programs.

(4) Workers will have multiple careers over their lifetimes, resulting in the need for community colleges to provide adults with lifelong learning and training opportunities.

(5) The gap between income and skills/education will grow; thus, to ensure adequate incomes for North Carolinians, community colleges must serve more adults through training and educational programs.

(6) To cushion the impact of expected shifts in economic conditions, our colleges must have an adequate base budget and some protection from minor fluctuations in revenue collection and FTE generation.

(7) Communication technology will change organizational structures, and the community colleges must be prepared to use the technology to improve their ability to respond to the needs of students and businesses and industry.

Demographic

(1) NCCCS programs and services must address the educational and training needs of the poor, racial minorities, and the underprivileged.

(2) Regional and geographic differences across the state will require flexibility in community colleges' design of programs and delivery of services.

(3) Because of the increasing proportion of older adults and their need to work longer, community colleges must provide lifelong learning opportunities for the elderly.

(4) Between now and 2005, the NCCCS must be prepared for an influx of enrollment by the traditional college-aged students between 18 and 24 years old.

(5) In geographic areas with large numbers of Hispanics, community colleges must customize their English as a Second Language, adult literacy, and workforce training programs to support this population.

(6) NCCCS will need to provide more professional development to prepare faculty and staff for the changing environment in the workplace and the diversity of the student population.

Political

(1) NCCCS must cultivate political support by increased visibility and a united community college message.

(2) NCCCS must develop appropriate measures of outcomes to justify funding.

(3) NCCCS must ensure essential funding needs in light of changes in traditional political party structure and political philosophy.

(4) To maintain political support, NCCCS must respond to external forces that require additional services to students.

Social

(1) A large percentage of adults in North Carolina are at a low level of literacy and, therefore, cannot function successfully in personal or work situations. Community colleges will be expected to assist these adults to become ready for work.

(2) The changing demands of work and family in a diverse society will necessitate greater flexibility in time, place, and length of community college courses. Students may require colleges to offer additional family support services.

(3) Community colleges must adapt to the changing needs of their customers, students (workers), businesses, colleges, and the community and adjust their resources, instruction, and program offerings accordingly.

(4) Community colleges are called upon to address the societal problem that the traditional work ethic is not valued. Another challenge to community colleges is to change societal attitudes that view different types of careers (non-traditional and vocational) as undesirable and unattractive, thus limiting career choices.

(5) With an increase in ethnic, gender, and cultural diversity, community colleges must develop ways to overcome barriers of language, culture, and life style.

(6) Community colleges must be prepared to provide training for jobs that require more education and training than in the past, especially training in computer skills.

(7) At the present many of our communities do not provide cultural and leisure activities for adults. Community colleges should play a significant role in offering cultural and leisure programming.

Technology

(1) Increased use of technology by our customers will require that community colleges redefine delivery systems.

(2) Community colleges must increase their use of technology to enable effective partnerships with those businesses and agencies that have not been sufficiently served in the past.

(3) The increasing demand for people with technology expertise in supporting current equipment requires that community colleges provide more technology training on up-to-date equipment.

(4) The increasing demand for connectivity between community colleges, homes, public schools, businesses, and external resources requires NCCCS to develop the communication infrastructure to support distance learning and remote access to resources.

(5) The funding model for technology and technical staff at community colleges must be examined and redefined to support the increased demand for and reliance on technology for instructional and administrative functions.

(6) Community colleges must increase the use of technology to reach under served customers.

(7) NCCCS must work to reduce administrative, regulatory and accrediting barriers to the effective use of technology at the colleges.

MISSION

The mission of the North Carolina Community College System is to open the door to high-quality, accessible educational opportunities that minimize barriers to post-secondary education, maximize student success, and improve the lives and well-being of individuals by providing:

- Education, training and retraining for the workforce, including basic skills and literacy education, occupational and pre-baccalaureate programs.
- Support for economic development through services to and in partnership with business and industry.
- Services to communities and individuals which improve the quality of life.

Strategic Initiatives and Goals

Train the Workforce for Emerging Jobs and a Changing Workplace

Goal 1: Develop the educational and training programs necessary to meet the workforce needs of each service area.

1.1 By 2001 develop education and training programs to address 90 percent of the occupations identified as high demand or emerging at the local, regional, and state levels.

1.2 By 2001 achieve a 90 percent satisfaction response rate on a statewide survey designed to determine employer satisfaction with the North Carolina Community College System meeting workforce training needs.

1.3 By 2000, in partnership with public schools, implement a functional, effective tech prep program with mutually agreed upon standards, accessible to every public school student.

1.4 Develop new associate degree programs in cooperation with the University of North Carolina System in areas with specialized needs for resources.

Goal 2: Promote recruitment and retention of faculty and staff necessary to achieve the educational and training objectives of the community college system.

2.1 By 2001 increase by 5 percent the year-to-year retention of *full-time faculty* hired within the last five years.

2.2 By 2001 increase average salaries of *full-time faculty* and staff from 83.3 percent of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) average to the SREB average.

2.3 By 2001 increase by 10 percent the participation of faculty and staff in professional development programs.

Goal 3: Acquire and maintain the facilities, equipment and learning resources to support the educational and training objectives of the community college system.

3.1 By 2001 establish a four-year replacement cycle of instructional equipment and technology.

3.2 By 2000 expand access to information resources for workforce preparation by identifying resources beyond ***NC LIVE*** and developing a plan for acquisition of those resources.

3.3 By 2001 improve by 10 percent the statewide percentage of facilities meeting "satisfactory" building conditions, as measured in the Annual Facilities Inventory and Utilization Study.

Serve the Lifelong Learning Needs of Diverse Populations

Goal 4: Provide all students with essential skills for lifelong learning.

4.1 By 2001 increase by 10 percent the percentage of *basic skills students* who annually complete the level entered.

4.2 By 2001 increase the percentage of basic skills graduates and recent high school graduates, by 10 percent respectively, who continue their education at community colleges.

4.3 By 2001 increase by 8 percent the percentage of *students achieving their goal(s)*.

4.4 By 2001 increase by 4 percent the retention rate of *award seeking curriculum students*.

4.5 By 2001 enhance the awareness of the community colleges as a cultural arts resource.

Goal 5: Upgrade and retrain adult workers through accessible educational and training programs.

5.1 By 2001 increase by 10 percent the number of education and training opportunities available through *alternate delivery systems*.

5.2 By 2000 increase the funding level of occupational extension offerings to that of curriculum programs.

Goal 6: Provide educational and training opportunities that meet the needs of underserved groups.

6.1 By 2001 increase participation in English as a Second Language (ESL) by 10 percent.

6.2 At each community college establish partnerships with local, regional, and state agencies and employers to address the needs of current and former welfare recipients.

6.3 By 2001 identify populations under represented in community college programs and increase their presence by 10 percent in those programs.

Promote Quality and Flexible Programs and Services

Goal 7: Develop innovative and flexible programs and services that meet the needs of the workforce and the economy.

7.1 By 2000 conduct a statewide assessment and develop programs and services to address identified economic development needs.

7.2 By 2000 conduct a systemwide assessment to determine regulatory barriers that impede the development of innovative and flexible programs and services and develop a plan to reduce those barriers.

7.3 By 1999 identify barriers to the success of developmental students and develop strategies for overcoming those barriers.

7.4 By 2000 develop a plan for implementing *specialized training centers* to address emerging job needs.

Goal 8: Expand public awareness of and support for the North Carolina Community College System.

8.1 By 2001 develop and implement a statewide marketing plan that reflects the mission of the system and the opportunities available at the local institutions.

8.2 By 2001 increase public awareness of the role of community colleges in economic development.

Goal 9: Utilize appropriate measures of quality for the improvement of programs and services.

9.1 By 2000 review and revise the requirements of system-level accountability processes to reduce redundancy in reporting, improve data for decision making, and improve the cost effectiveness of the processes.

9.2 By 2000 establish *system benchmarks of core indicators* that measure programs and services.

Procure and Allocate Essential Resources for the System

Goal 10: Increase funding to levels necessary to fulfill the community college system mission.

10.1 By December 1999 develop a strategy for assessing fiscal needs not met by the 1999-2001 biennial budget in preparation for the 2001-2003 biennial budget planning cycle.

10.2 By April 2000 implement a process for determining and adopting a unified legislative budget request for the 2001-2003 biennium.

Goal 11: Design an allocation method to meet the diverse needs of the fifty-eight community colleges.

11.1 By July 2000 implement fully the recommendations from the Funding Study Advisory Committee adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges.

11.2 By June 2001 assess and modify as needed the new budget funding stability provisions.

11.3 By July 1999 implement changes to the library resource allocation formula to ensure that libraries are able to meet specialized and regional accrediting agency requirements.

Goal 12: Develop a process for measuring the effectiveness of resource allocation and utilization.

12.1 By July 2000 implement new monitoring systems for college expenditure information that will provide local and state decision makers with consistent, comparative cost data.

12.2 By July 2000 identify areas of resource needs by assessing the level of consistency between initial resource allocation (formula) for 1999-2000 and final expenditures by the colleges for 1999-2000.

Leverage the Power of Technology

Goal 13: Support faculty and staff in the appropriate use of instructional technology.

13.1 By July 2000 organize and deliver *internally-contracted professional development* on technology-based competencies for 25 percent of *full-time faculty* and staff each year for each college.

13.2 During 2000 conduct a system-sponsored instructional technology conference and support faculty and staff attendance through travel and release time.

13.3 By 2000 provide Internet access to every community college employee and student.

13.4 By 2001 develop a collaborative plan with the public school system and the University of North Carolina System for using technology for instructional delivery.

Goal 14: Create an integrated, system-wide virtual learning environment.

14.1 By April 1999 revise policies to remove barriers to distance learning and develop a consensus plan and supporting budget request for organizing the *NC virtual learning community*.

14.2 By December 1999 provide centralized support for virtual learning for community colleges.

14.3 By September 2000 begin delivery of instruction through the *NC virtual learning community*.

Goal 15: Provide and support state-of-the-art administrative systems to integrate the North Carolina Community College System electronically.

15.1 By 2001 implement the first phase of the *new administrative computing systems*.

APPENDIX

Appendix A.....**Glossary of Terms**

Appendix B.....**NC State Board of Community Colleges**

Appendix C.....**Planning Council**

Appendix D.....**Advisory Committee**

Appendix E.....**Environmental Scanning Teams**

Glossary of Terms

Alternate delivery system: Instruction delivered through technology in ways other than the traditional face-to-face lecture/discussion method.

Award seeking curriculum students: Students enrolled in credit programs who have stated their intention to earn a certificate, diploma, or associate degree.

Basic skills students: Students enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), Adult High School Diploma (AHSD), Compensatory Education (CED), or English as a Second Language.

Full-time faculty: Employed on an annual contract for at least nine months as a full-time employee.

Goal: Sets a four- to five-year direction for addressing strategic initiatives.

Internally-contracted professional development: Contracting faculty and staff at community colleges to conduct professional development activities rather than using external sources, such as private training companies.

NC LIVE: North Carolina Libraries for Virtual Education (NC LIVE) is a statewide electronic library project that includes the State Library, the North Carolina Community College System the University of North Carolina System, and the North Carolina Independent Colleges. The purpose of the project is to provide equal access to a range of electronic information and resources.

NC virtual learning community: Multiple delivery strategies that enable just-in-time, self-directed, self-paced learning. The virtual learning community embraces multiple delivery strategies that are flexible regarding time, place, and instructional design.

New administrative computing systems: The North Carolina Community College System is evaluating alternative strategies for meeting the administrative information system requirements of its 59 institutions and System Office. This effort is the work of the Information Systems for the Future Task Force that was established in April 1997. Information about this effort is available at the North Carolina Community College System Web site (under Tech Support . . . Projects . . . Administrative Systems for the Future Reports).

Objective: Specific steps for achieving a goal. The objectives are written to be completed within two years and are measurable.

Specialized training centers: Entities established by the North Carolina Community College System, probably at existing community college sites, to address specialized training required by business and industry on a statewide or regional basis.

Strategic Initiatives: A limited set of priorities, consistent with the mission statement, that provides the broad framework for a plan.

Students achieving their goals: These data are defined in the Annual Program Review which is required for all community colleges. The information is collected by means of a survey.

System benchmarks of core indicators: A set of core performance measures (indicators) identified by the System Planning Council to be tracked over several years as part of the Critical Success Factors report. Benchmarks, or performance levels, will be established that will allow performance to be assessed relative to external data.

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